

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 11 and 13 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-9, 11 and 13 presently stand rejected. Claims 1, 3, and 8 are independent claims.

Applicant believe that cited reference, Kemp et al. (6,253,815), has not been listed on a Notice of Reference Cited form at this time. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to forwarded a PTO-892 listing Kemp et al. (6,253,815).

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-9, 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1, 3, and 8

With respect to independent claims 1, 3, and 8, the Examiner asserts that the use of the phrase “joined portion” is unclear because the specification refers to a joined portion as meaning a part with bottoms and including the serrations, while the claims seem to refer to a single points/lines.

In response, Applicant has amended claims 1, 3, and 8 to recite that each protruding portion includes a joined portion that is provided *around the protruding portion*. That is, the “joining portion” is not part of the decorative portion but is instead provided around the protruding portion.

Referring to the exemplary embodiments, the decorative portion 15 is joined to the protruding portion at various points, some being lower and some being higher because the decorative portion includes a pattern of serrations including tops and bottoms. FIG. 3 of the original specification, for example, shows the bottoms 19 (i.e., lower points) of the joined portions.

Dependent Claims

With respect to dependent claim 7, the Examiner asserts that there is no antecedent basis for a “bottom of the joined portion.” Applicant believe that this rejection is moot in view of the amendments made to claims 1 and 7.

With respect to claims 2 and 8, the Examiner asserts that it is unclear how the “high decorative portion” is “high.” In response, Applicant respectfully submits that this decorative portion is “high” because the bottoms of the “high decorative portion” (see DB in FIG. 6) are higher than the root groove line X.

In view of the amendments and explanation discussed above, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103

Claims 1-3, 8, 9, 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kemp et al. (US 6,253,815).

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Kemp.

Claims 1-3, 8, 9, 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Vizina (US D204585).

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Vizina.

Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vizina or Kemp, and further in view of JP 2000-255224 (cited by applicant) and optionally Ratliff, Jr. (US 5,807,446).

Claims 1 and 3

Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 3 to recite that:

each protruding portion adjoins to the serrated decorative portion at a joined portion that is *provided around the protruding portion*, wherein bottoms of the joined portion are higher than the root groove line with respect to the direction of protruding from the sidewall.

Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claims 1 and 3 are patentable at least because neither Kemp nor Vinzina teaches or suggests all of the recitations of the amended claim.

Although the joined portions shown in FIG. 2 of Kemp are higher than the bottoms of the decorative portion, these joined portions are not the *bottoms* of the joined portion that is formed around Kemp's protruding portions. Instead, if the cross-sectional view of Kemp were taken at a place where the bottoms of the serrations join with the protruding portion, instead of the tops, the bottoms of the joined portion would be at the same height of as the bottoms of the serrations (i.e., at the root groove line). Thus, the configuration of Kemp is similar to that shown in Background Art FIG. 1 of the present specification.

Moreover, the "joined portions" of Vinzina are also provided at the same height as the root groove line. In this way, the configuration of Vinzina is also similar to that shown in Background Art FIG. 1.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 3 patentable.

Claim 8

Applicant has amended independent claim 8 to recite that:

each protruding portion includes a joined portion that is *provided around the protruding portion*; and

a high decorative portion including serrations having a pattern of tops and bottoms is *provided between the protruding portions*, wherein the protruding portions adjoin the high decorative portion at joined portions of the respective protruding portions, and *the bottoms of the joined portions and the bottoms of the high decorative portion are higher than the root groove line*.

Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 8 is patentable at least because neither Kemp nor Vinzina teaches or suggests all of the recitations of the amended claim. For example, Vizina merely discloses a flat portion provided between the protrusions and no high decorative portion, while Kemp merely discloses decorative portions with bottoms at the *same height* as the root groove line.

Moreover, with respect to FIG. 5 of Baker, Applicant respectfully submits that, although a feature that might be considered a “high decorative portion” is provided (at interior wall 34), the bottoms of the joined portions are provided at the same height as the root groove line (i.e., lower surface 60).

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 8 is patentable.

Dependent Claims

Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 2, 4-7, 9, 11 and 13 are patentable at least because of their dependency from claim 1 or claim 3.

In addition, with respect to dependent claims 5 and 6, neither JP 2000-255224 nor optionally Ratliff, Jr., which the Examiner cites as showing a round connection between portions, do not make up for the deficiencies in Vinzina and Baker discussed above.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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